

PRIME MINISTER

The attached letter from Charles Wilson asks you to review Mr. Gorbachev's forthcoming book in the Times.

It is an unusual request and I expect that your instinctive reaction will be to say no. But it actually bears a moment's reflection. A review would be an opportunity for quite an important public statement on major East-West issues after the Summit in early December. Moreover since the main purpose of Gorbachev's book is to show himself in the best possible light to Western public opinion it is important to administer a powerful antidote. No one is better placed than you. It could be done without seeming to criticise Mr. Gorbachev personally (or not much).

I realise that this is a bit of a long shot. But you might like to discuss it.

(C. D. POWELL)

9 November 1987